

Human Rights and Life Sciences

This month AAAS submitted a report to the United Nations on activities being carried out by U.S. organizations to ensure that life and health sciences develop in a manner consistent with human rights standards. The information was requested by the U.N. assistant secretary-general for human rights, Ibrahima Fall, in response to a March 1993 Human Rights Commission resolution titled "Human rights and bioethics."

The resolution states, among other things, the right of everyone "to enjoy the benefits of scientific research and its applications" and not to be subjected

without consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

The request was made to Audrey Chapman, director of AAAS's Science and Human Rights Program, because the Association has official consultative status with the U.N. Economic and Social Council, under which the U.N. Commission on Human Rights falls.

The report is based on a consultation convened last month by AAAS's Science and Human Rights and Scientific Freedom, Responsibility, and Law programs, along with five other organizations. Also included is information from nearly 40 professional associations and research centers that responded to a survey conducted by AAAS.

"It was the first time such a range of professional associations had come together to discuss human rights standards and compliance," Chapman said. One significant outcome, she added, was interest in collaborative programs such as training practitioners and researchers to recognize and deal with potential human rights abuses, and systematic monitoring of compliance with professional codes of conduct.

Dan Brock, a professor of philosophy at Brown University and a representative of the American Association for Bioethics, noted in the report that although the ethical guidelines used today in deciding bioethical issues do not explicitly em-

ploy a human rights framework, they nonetheless have implicit commitments to human rights principles.

For a copy, write to the Science and Human Rights Program, AAAS, 1333 H Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20005.

Directorate Head Named to NSB

Shirley Malcom, head of AAAS's Education and Human Resources Directorate and a recognized leader in efforts to boost participation in science, mathematics, and engineering by underrepresented groups, will join the National Science Board (NSB) for a 6-year term.

She was named to the position in December by President Clinton and confirmed last week by the Senate. Malcom will be one of only two women on the 25-member NSB, the policy-making panel of the National Science Foundation.

During nearly 20 years at AAAS, Malcom has directed a wide range of programs designed to improve science education; expand access to science and related careers by women, minorities, and people with disabilities; connect community-based organizations to local science resources; and strengthen public understanding of science.

Previously, she was a program manager at the National Science Foundation and taught college biology and high school science.



Shirley Malcom

Making Math and Science Work for Hispanic Youths

From the beginning it seemed like a natural fit. Still, things moved remarkably fast when Abbott Laboratories considered a partnership with AAAS's "Proyecto Futuro" program and the company's major facility in Puerto Rico.

In February, only weeks after initial discussions, AAAS staff trained 50 lead teachers from 16 schools near Abbott's Barceloneta operations in hands-on exercises to help students better learn science and math. The learning kits and bilingual instructional materials, designed for Hispanic students in grades K-8, were developed by AAAS and tested in eight Chicago schools with support from the U.S. Department of Education.

Making teachers familiar and comfortable with the project's 40 activities, many of which focus on basic concepts in the physical sciences, is the aim of the training. "That's what teachers told us they need," said Proyecto Futuro director Estrella Triana. To expand the reach, each of the lead teachers holds an in-service workshop for other teachers.

Last week the teachers in Puerto Rico met again with AAAS staff to discuss implementation at their individual schools. There was excitement about the project. "We are pleased that the school principals and teachers have responded so enthusiastically," said Jose Luis Rodriguez, vice president of Abbott's Puerto



Classroom tools for understanding. Teacher training workshop at Abbott Laboratories in Puerto Rico.

Rico operations. Support from Abbott, a worldwide health care company, includes workshop facilities and \$25,000 in program costs. Abbott employees will visit the schools as role models.

One goal of Proyecto Futuro is involving parents and community leaders in strategies to encourage children in science and math. Under a \$100,000 grant from the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, a 2-year community-based Proyecto Futuro program is being organized in New York City, coordinated by a local planning council and administered jointly by AAAS and ASPIRA, a 33-year-old organization that promotes leadership and educational achievement by Latino youths. In July, Proyecto Futuro activities will be introduced in eight schools in Albuquerque, New Mexico.